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ABSTRACT

This volume considers the value of Esperanto in relation to international tourism, and the characteristics of Esperantist tourists. Esperanto is seen as a solution to problems of language in international relations in general, and thus to international travel as well. The following are some of the general characteristics of the majority of Esperanto tourists. They are found to be teachers or office workers, male, in the 36-45 or 56-65 age group, and to have completed secondary or higher education. Their chief motivation in traveling is the desire to visit new places and to associate with other Esperanto speakers. A short bibliography is followed by an appendix containing a statistical summary of the events for 1977 as listed by the newspaper "Heroldo de Esperanto." (AM)

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INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL BY SPEAKERS OF ESPERANTO

by
Tyburcjusz Tyblewski

FOREWORD

The speakers of the international language Esperanto constitute a significant and growing market. Though not immediately recognizable as a coherent community which can be found and addressed as one unit (because speakers of Esperanto rarely have cause to reveal to travel agents this, their special characteristic), Esperantists journey, on average, more miles yearly and spend, on average, more time on foreign travel than any other single language group: their interest in tourism is exceptionally high.

For the most part Esperanto speakers belong to the middle class of tourists and wage earners. Many are teachers, small businessmen, civil servants, and officials, and a significant proportion are young people. They have generally learned Esperanto because they are convinced internationalists, so it is natural that they should have a lively interest in foreign travel. For many Esperantists summer travel is one of the main interests in life, and they are willing to make careful preparations and save up long in advance to go on such trips. Of course, many speakers of the language are willing to spend large sums for a brief trip or tourist visit, but most often Esperantists like to tailor their budget to obtain the best value possible and seek travel at reduced rates and under group arrangements. Nevertheless, if conditions are right, they are willing to dedicate a relatively high proportion of their annual income to travel.

Because Esperanto speakers favour the general use of their language as a second language for all people, they naturally favour those firms and travel agencies which show approval for this idea (or demonstrate that at the very least they recognize the existence of such a market) by publishing their publicity material also in Esperanto or by advertising in the Esperanto press. As long as Esperanto is still not in general use, Esperanto speakers understandably prefer to utilize the services of those businesses who use their language.

As Dr. Tyblewski rightly remarks in this study, Esperanto is a potentially important tool for the tourist industry. In the field of international travel, at present the linguistic situation is chaotic. Although the so-called major languages – English, French, German – are widely used as 'bridge' languages in large hotels and among the principal tourist bodies, knowledge of these languages is not so widely met with when one strays from the main tourist routes. And as soon as governments become involved and the relative status of the various languages comes in question, the chaos intensifies – as is apparent in the jealousy and justifiable feelings of national self-respect which have surrounded the recent efforts of the nine countries of the European Community to reach agreement on such a simple matter as the languages to be used on a future European Passport. At one stroke Esperanto could cut through these political and cultural entanglements. Its general teaching in schools would lift the language question right out of the political arena. Even its limited use as an international medium, for example by common agreement in the tourist industry, would greatly facilitate international contacts and the free movement of people and ideas across national boundaries.

It is a welcome sign that many local tourist offices, national tourist boards and commercial travel agencies have begun to use Esperanto, at least on a limited scale in their brochures and advertising. This not only contributes to international understanding, but is also sensible business policy.

Humphrey Tonkin

NOTE

to tourist organizations wishing to make use of Esperanto

Information on tourist brochures currently published in Esperanto, details of principal conferences and other Esperanto events, and materials for the learning of Esperanto, can be obtained by writing to the Universal Esperanto Association (UEA). UEA can also make available translating and editing services and provide assistance as a consultant. Most Esperanto magazines publish advertisements, and UEA carries advertising in its journal Esperanto, its youth magazine Kontakto and its Yearbook.

Tyburcjusz Tyblewski

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL BY SPEAKERS OF ESPERANTO

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS TOURISM?

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state", and "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country" (art. 13). As if in answer to this, there has taken place since the Second World War a rapid intensification and growth of tourism. Today, the leading theorist in this field, Walter Hunziker, has concluded that tourism has become a necessity of life for ordinary people. A mass explosion of tourism, although affecting only a few parts of the world, is having repercussions in various spheres of life, particularly the economic. Nevertheless, the effects of tourism concern social relationships in the widest sense.

The Polish writer Przecławski defines tourism, as distinct from business travel, as all phenomena of geographic movement motivated by voluntary, temporary change of abode, environment and routine, and of direct contact with the place visited. Tourism can be classified under various headings: under, for instance, its individual or collective character; the mode of transport; its goals, geographical or emotional, etc. One must distinguish between the objective and subjective factors in tourism. The former are bound up with the tourist himself, with the value to him of the place to be visited and with the arrangements for beginning the journey. The latter are motivations which, though dependent on the subjective factors, have their origin in the psyche of the tourist. Both factors have three elements: the wish to visit some place, region, country or environment; the wish to leave temporarily one's normal abode; the wish to associate with someone outside one's usual place of residence. The relative importance of the three elements varies from case to case.

On the global scale, men make up the majority (two thirds) of all tourists, but if we subtract those who travel for business and similar reasons, limiting ourselves to those 'true' tourists, who travel for pleasure, we find that women are in the majority. In the U.S.A. during the period 1956-65, women received 56% of the passports. According to the British Travel Association, 54% of incoming foreign tourists in the year 1964-5 were women. In New Zealand the rating was 53%; in the Federal Republic of Germany 65%, and in Finland the figure reached as much as 75%.

The female tourists can be classified in three categories. In their role as independent individuals between 18 and 24 years old, they travel more often than their male counterparts who are then doing their military service or establishing themselves in their occupations. Between the age of 25 and 45, they are generally in the company of their husbands, but for domestic reasons they travel less than do their spouses. After the age of 45, during the usual years of unchanging marital status, once more it is the women who travel more. For many, tourism becomes a ruling passion and spur to activity.

It has also been established that it is usually the women who decide on the method of travel, type of accommodation and purchases. They also react with enthusiasm to tourist advertising. In a recent survey carried out in the chief tourist areas, the women interviewed admitted that for them the main attraction of tourism was the chance to meet new people and do inexpensive shopping.

ESPERANTO AND TOURISM

Although Esperanto speakers use the International Language in connection with local, district and national activities, active interest in Esperanto itself implies international travel as being in keeping with the basic aims of the language. Speakers of Esperanto have specific motives for travelling, resulting from a desire to use their language with foreigners from various countries. Hence, modifying the foregoing definition of tourism, we may say that the tourism of Esperantists is a phenomenon of geographical movement motivated by a voluntary temporary change of abode, environment and routine and by the desire for direct contact with the place being visited, and especially with its inhabitants or guests – by means of the International Language.

The affinity between Esperanto and tourism has been evident at every stage of the former's ninety-year history. As early as 1900, for example, the Touring Club of France began to use the International Language by printing suitable articles in its publications. The first World Congress of Esperanto in 1905 (in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France) started a tradition of large international Esperanto congresses, which still continues. The Universal Esperanto Association (UEA), when it was founded in 1908, divided its work into three branches, of which one was tourism. "The aim of the Association," it declared, "is the facilitation of all kinds of relationships between peoples of differing mother tongues and the creation of a strong bond of solidarity among the members."

UEA launched its so-called Delegate Service (at first these Delegates were called Consuls), through which it nominated local 'Delegates', who provided information to the members on subjects of the most diverse nature, for example commerce, industry, transport, working conditions, employment, wages, tourism, pedagogy, and so on. In principle a very useful service, in flourishing use up to the present day, it nevertheless led to a kind of social isolation on the part of Esperanto speakers, who, providing services for themselves, did not feel the need to avail themselves of the official information offices and services of the various countries.

In Sweden organized Esperanto tourist trips began in 1927, and other countries followed suit. These organized journeys are an essential element in the annual World Esperanto Congresses, which usually take place in capitals or large cities and bring together Esperanto speakers from all over the world. Up to 1976, there have occurred 61 such Congresses in the following countries: Austria (3), Belgium (3), Britain (7), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark (3), Finland (2), France (5), Germany (6), Greece, Hungary (2), Italy (2), Japan, Netherlands (4), Norway, Poland (5), Spain (2), Sweden (2), Switzerland (5), United States (3), Yugoslavia (2).

In addition to the World Congresses, there take place regularly congresses, conferences, seminars, courses, tourist and other kinds of meetings, organized either by

UEA or by other associations or societies. Of these last the most important are the annual congresses of Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda, the World Association for Non-Nationhood (49 have been held to date); the congresses of railway employees (28 to date); and the youth congresses (31 to date). The year 1972 saw 52 different international meetings in 24 countries with a total participation of twelve thousand people. Among the best known are the Summer Esperanto University in Gyula, Hungary; the International Esperantists' Holiday at Międzygórze, Poland, and the courses in the Grésillon Cultural Centre, France.

The proliferation of such events and the needs of individual tourists have led to the publication of many prospectuses and brochures in Esperanto. To date upwards of 1200 have appeared in Europe, Asia and America. Since the last war they have increased appreciably in number. Promotional films on tourism have also increased. There has been a parallel increase in the number of Esperanto events of a purely tourist character and, thanks to travel parties from outside Europe, the international nature of the gatherings has been intensified.

If we look at the tourism of Esperanto speakers in terms of its most typical motives, we see that it takes place mainly because of the desire to visit fresh environments or associate with Esperanto speakers in foreign countries. In terms of the criteria of detailed classification already mentioned, we note that Esperantists do their foreign travel for the most part as adults, and that a majority are men who have completed secondary or higher education. As regards profession, they are mostly teachers and various kinds of office workers. Recent surveys appearing in the magazines *Scienca Revuo* and *Esperanto* (table 1) showed that the age groups 36-45 and 56-65 provide the greatest numbers of tourists. This confirms the overall picture. But at variance with it is the number of women in the same age groupings, who, among the whole Esperanto population, form only a bare 34% minority.

Table 1

Age	Scienca Revuo	Esperanto	Total
up to 25	11	16	27
26 - 35	33	29	62
36 - 45	58	44	102
46 - 55	46	40	86
56 - 65	75	53	128
over 65	42	44	86
Totals	265	226	491
Women	73	93	166

Esperantists generally travel during their holidays, which in Europe and North America occur in the months of June, July and August. According to the Esperanto Tourism Calendar for 1976, of 124 international Esperanto events 70 were in summer and only 5 in winter. The average length of Esperantist travel is three weeks (21 days).

Usually Esperantists travel alone or in small groups. This results from the international consistency of the various Esperanto groups, and the relative infrequency of travel parties organized to get people together as one body, for transit from their homeland to a particular country in which a congress is taking place. Travel parties, nevertheless, are on the increase.

Although ability to speak the International Language is the distinguishing quality of the Esperanto tourist, it does not in principle affect the mode of travel. It follows that one should consider Esperanto travel in the first place as non-specialist (without a specific body of knowledge). The Esperantists travel above all else to the country of the World Congress, where some 2500 representatives of more than thirty countries, on the average, gather annually. Usually the World Congress has its venue in Europe. As we have said already, the purposes of the present touring activities of Esperantists are to travel abroad to take part in congresses or conferences, to honour or to study the personality and work of Zamenhof, the creator and founder of Esperanto, and to acquire knowledge and experience by means of direct contact with nature, culture and society. Esperantists seldom travel for such purposes as convalescence or relaxation, and almost never for financial gain, participation in sports, or the various arts.

The most common mode of transport is the train. Next come plane and car.

ESPERANTO... THE LANGUAGE OF TOURISM

Tourism provides a wide field for the mass utilization of the International Language. The really effective development of international tourism with the participation of many social strata would seem not to be realizable without the use of a language which is both simple and neutral. This is particularly evident in the field of cultural tourism, to which Esperanto particularly belongs. Specialists in language have already noted the suitability of Esperanto for international relations, so let us leave aside the philological arguments for the International Language, considering only that once learned it works perfectly for communication and interaction in the field of tourism. Esperanto has already been tested in many ways as a medium by which to cross the traditional barriers hampering the relations between native inhabitants and visitors. In this sense it is a mechanism whose lack outside Esperanto society makes difficult or even impossible that genuine cultural tourism which in our modern world is becoming increasingly significant.

International tourism is today one of the broadest fields in which a knowledge of Esperanto yields numerous practical benefits, through the help of UEA Delegates and individual private Esperantists. Tourism is also the area which presents the most abundant possibilities for further, larger-scale practical use of the International Language.

It is evident that Esperanto speakers are the only clearly-definable group who can freely understand each other without linguistic barriers: the world can mean something more to them than to those who are confronted at every turn by language difficulties. Indeed, the users of the International Language do not merely avoid the various vexations of language in their contacts with foreigners, but they also find in their ability to understand one another the basic motivation for their engaging in tourism.

Esperanto, because of its structural qualities, works as a unifying force. The ease with which its speakers can put across their ideas, the fact that they belong to many different countries, the relative breadth of the language – these mean that in certain spheres Esperanto removes or at least limits national and regional prejudices. This influences the outlook of Esperantists which, in its turn, has a positive effect even on those not speakers of Esperanto.

Esperanto tourism merits examination from various points of view because its complex international framework and its combination of different elements are still not fully and sufficiently known. Nevertheless, we may justifiably conclude even at this stage, that the type of tourism experience found in its most characteristic form among Esperantists helps to internationalize the personality of the individual, opening up new psychological perspectives. Esperantists themselves must now apply those well-tried forms of tourism practised by the non-speakers of Esperanto. These millions of non-speakers, despite the abundant modes of tourism, await a clearer and more definite purpose for the travel that they engage in. Esperanto might provide this.

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APPENDIX

Each year the newspaper *Heroldo de Esperanto (Bruxelles)* publishes a calendar of forthcoming events. The calendar is of course provisional and incomplete, but it does give an insight into the range of meetings and other activities organized each year, at least for Europe. The following is a statistical summary of the events for 1977 as listed in the *Heroldo* calendar. The calendar does not include purely local activities and other meetings of lesser importance.

	Events with primarily national participation	International events	General conferences, meetings, etc.	Specialized and professional conferences	Courses and seminars on Esperanto	Courses and Seminars conducted in Esperanto	Holiday meetings	Youth meetings	TOTAL
Australia	1							1	1
Austria	1	1					2		2
Belgium	1	1	2						2
Brazil	1		1						1
Britain	4	4	3	4			1		8
Bulgaria	2	1					2	1	3
Canada	1		1						1
Czechoslovakia	11	3	2		4	1	7		14
Denmark	1	2	2		1				3
Finland	3	1	1			3			4
France	8	3	4	2		4		1	11
Fed. Rep. Germany		9	1	2	1	2	1	2	9
German Dem. Rep.	1						1		1
Hungary	10	4	4			1	6	3	14
Iceland		1	1						1
Italy	1	2	2					1	3
Japan	4		4						4
Luxembourg		1		1					1
Netherlands		1					1		1
New Zealand	1		1						1
Poland	14	15	1	4	1	6	14	3	29
Spain	3		2					1	3
Sweden	1		1						1
Switzerland	4	1	1			2	1	1	5
U.S.A.	3		1		2				3
Yugoslavia	1			1					1
TOTAL	77	50	35	14	9	19	36	14	127

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